

BOROUGH OF MOUNTAIN LAKES RECREATION COMMISSION
Monthly Meeting Minutes – Quick Notes
Minutes for January 16, 2024 at 7:30 PM - Zoom

1. Call to Order

A monthly meeting of Borough of Mountain Lakes Recreation Commission was held on January 16, 2024 on Zoom teleconference. It began at 7:30 PM and was presided over by chairperson David Keyt, with Derek Jackson as secretary.

2. Attendees

Voting Members in attendance: James Aitken, Phyllis Deering, Derek Jackson, David Keyt, Shaun Lehrer, Mark Odenwelder, Rob Wianecki

Non-voting Members in attendance: Laurie Stepper (Recreation Director), Melissa Muilenburg (Council Liaison)

Guests in attendance: None

Members not in attendance: Heather Hornyak, Tish Scarola

3. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting on December 19, 2023 was made by David and seconded by Derek.

4. Report of the Recreation Director

Report was presented by Laurie Stepper.

- Continue to meet with community members who are involved with various programs and events.
 - Elizabeth Grembowiec, General Manager Mountain Lakes Club.
 - Bob and Sue Elko for HUB Lakes.
 - Jim Morlock and Ron Gironda, Trout Derby Committee
 - Tracy Pryer, Recreation Director, Town of Boonton.
- Holiday Events
 - Holiday Gathering and PBA Food Drive had been postponed to Wed, Dec 20 from 4:30-6pm due to rain and wind gusts. About 30-40 people attended the event and enjoyed two holiday crafts, scavenger hunt, and treats provided by Hapgoods. In total 182 lbs. of food were donated.
- Secured two quotes to have the Jan Wilson Memorial Basketball Court re-stripped. This will be done when temperatures are above 50 degrees.
- All Rack and Ring vessels have been removed for the season.
- Ski Club started Tues, Jan 2 with 80 middle schoolers. First trip went smoothly. Jan 9 trip was cancelled due to rainstorm and will be made up on Feb 13.
- Jr Laker Wrestling had their first match Jan 6. It was moved to Demerest so the match could take place in the morning, as the snowstorm started early afternoon. We won half the matches, although due to the change in location and time, some wrestlers couldn't attend.

- The Photo Contest winners were notified and received their gift card to The Station restaurant.
- The responsibility of Safety Coordinator was added to my role. Reviewed various video trainings on MEL (Municipal Excess Liability) Safety Institute and had in-person meeting with Rick Control Consultant in January 2024. Safety Committee proposal was sent to Borough Manager in January.
- Requested quote from Musky Trout Hatchery for Trout Derby. April date pending until Feb Trout Derby Committee meeting.
- Finalized 2024 program schedule with USA Sports Group – soccer squirts, flag football, tennis, and multi-sports
- Updated Recycling Pickup Calendar and Trash and Recycling Guidelines. Dispersed via eblast, updated the website, posted to social media, and have printed copies in Borough Hall and the Library.

Other ongoing tasks

- Manage facility request from residents.
- Oversee and support sports programs with school facility requests and supply purchase, if needed.
- Weekly eblast
- Social Media posts

5. Old Business

- New Committee Member Introduction – Robert “Rob” Wianecki has joined the recreation commission. Rob is a 16-year resident of Mountain Lakes. He has twin 14-year-old freshmen girls in MLHS. They are swimmers and enjoy drama. Also has an older son and daughter who have graduated from college. Rob is an attorney by trade.
- Racks and Rings – Laurie, James Aitken and Derek Jackson met on January 3rd to discuss opportunities to improve the processes around racks and rings. The hope and goal is to create equity, and increase resident access to and use of the lakes. Some of the ideas that are being looked at are
 - Extend the rack and ring availability for those who really want to use the water craft from December 1 – March 1 at Island Beach. This will NOT allow year-round storage.
 - Create a sharing and borrowing system
 - Create more rings and racks at Island Beach
 - Change priority and location of heavier vessels to improve accessibility

6. New Business

- 2024 Calendar of Events (Draft WIP)
 - Draft WIP 2024 Calendar of Events
 - March 24 - Egg Hunt
 - March - Maple Sugaring?
 - April 8 - Solar Eclipse?

- April 20 - Trout Derby
- May - Photo Contest for Summer
- May - Yankees Tickets?
- June - Art at the Esplanade (likely not happening until 2025)
- June - Concerts on beach
- June - Summertime Bucket List
- July - Concerts on beach
- July 2 - Fireworks
- July 4 - Swim Races with MLC?
- August - Concerts on beach
- August - Movie Night
- September - Corn Hole Tournament - kids and adults?
- October - Door/Porch Decorating Contest
- October - Pumpkin carving contest?
- October - Spooky walk at Birchwood?
- November - Gingerbread Land Display and Contest
- November - Holiday pictures on Island Beach
- November - Photo Contest for Winter
- December - Door/Porch Decorating Contest
- December - Island Beach self-guided activities
- December 8 - Tree Lighting and PBA Food Drive
- December 29 - Menorah Lighting and PBA Food Drive
- Financial Assistance Application and Eligibility
 - Eligibility is still being discussed. It could be based on a sliding scale, which is VERY hard to do. Another alternative being considered is a 60-40 split of the cost.
 - Income verification would require W2 forms
 - The program could be funded from the facility use fees and summer recreation trust.
- Commemorative Bench Program
 - This been discussed in the past but has never been fully implemented.
 - The purpose would be to improve the parks and recreation spaces by adding benches. It would not be revenue generating but should be cost neutral.
 - Current or past residents, or organizations could sponsor a bench for a 15-year period. It would be an opportunity to commemorate a person, group or event.
 - Type of wood, plaque and fees will be discussed by the DPW.
- Recreation Program Cancellation and Refund Policy
 - Although a policy exists today, it has not been historically adhered to. Additional clarity is needed to make it effective, fair and viable.
 - Current policy buried on bottom of registration platform
 - **Refund Policy** Complete refunds or credits are given if a class is canceled or filled until a specified date. If you withdraw from a class, a full refund or credit will be given provided the request is made at least 21 days prior

to the first day of the program, some exceptions may apply but will be stated in the class description.

- \$25-50 cancellation fee, depending on the program
- Suggestion for non-camp programs
 - Refund policy
 - Full refunds are given if a program is cancelled by the Borough of Mountain Lakes.
 - If you are unable to attend a program, a written request for a refund of the fee must be received or emailed to recreation@mtnlakes.org at least 21 days prior to the program or program deadline, whichever comes first.
 - Refunds will be given minus 15% of the original fee to cover administrative costs.
 - In certain circumstances, such as a medical emergency, a refund will be considered with a doctor's written statement within 15 days after the event.
 - Program activities/events conducted by other institutions have their own cancellation policies that the Borough of Mountain Lakes cannot override. Refunds will be issued according to that institution's policies.
 - All deposits are non-refundable.
- Suggestion for summer camp programs
 - **Cancellation Policy**
 - Camp fees will be refunded, minus the \$25 deposit per session, ONLY if an email request is received to recreation@mtnlakes.org no later than May 29, 2024. Requests received after May 29, 2024 cannot be refunded.
 - In the case of an accident, illness (verification from a doctor is required), or death of an immediate family member, a camper will be offered the next available session, or a refund will be considered on an individual basis.
 - The Borough of Mountain Lakes reserves the right to cancel programs or services that do not meet our minimum enrollment requirements. All fees will be refunded if the camper is not placed in another program. There is no refund if a camper is asked to leave camp due to behavioral problems or disobeys camp policies.

7. Announcements

Next meeting February 20, 2024

8. Adjournment

David Keyt moved that the meeting be adjourned. Derek Jackson seconded the motion. The motion passed at 8:35 PM.